



HEALTH EVALUATION AND APPLIED RESEARCH DEVELOPMENT (HEARD)

Accelerating research-to-use in maternal and child health through an Implementation Science Collaborative approach

The purpose of the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) Health Evaluation and Applied Research Development (HEARD) Project is to undertake research efforts to accelerate progress towards achieving USAID's global health and development goals, including Ending Preventable Child and Maternal Death (EPCMD), achieving an AIDS-Free Generation (AFG) and Protecting Communities from Infectious Diseases Initiatives, including the Global Health Security Agenda. The HEARD Project will focus on evaluative and targeted research that accelerates research-to-use processes and anticipates carrying out two types of research activities:

- Multidisciplinary applied and implementation research and related activities that accelerate the research-to-use process focusing on targeted questions, barriers, and bottlenecks related to high priority interventions, technologies, policies and products that show promise or are ready for scale-up.
- Evaluative research and post-marketing surveillance of pilot programs and at-scale tools, technologies, interventions and policies around the main causes of maternal, child and neonatal deaths and morbidity.

THE CHALLENGE

Expanding capacities and the use of implementation science for evidence-informed policy and program decision making has long been a priority for USAID. The HEARD project will support the development of a global health Implementation Science Collaborative to address three major challenges:

- The disconnects between research conducted, data use, and service delivery improvement;
- The lack of focus on understanding program implementation (design, processes, impact) which makes it difficult to inform program improvement and policy processes and apply evidence across different country contexts; and
- The lack of understanding and prioritization of how research can be translated into practice and policy and its potential to develop and refine interventions and technologies that benefit impoverished communities.

PROJECT MANAGER & RESEARCH SYSTEMS INTEGRATOR

University Research Co., LLC

GLOBAL TECHNICAL ANCHORS

University of California, San Francisco and University of California, Berkeley Institute for Global Health Delivery and Diplomacy (IGHDD)

Graduate School of Public Health and Health Policy at the City University of New York

SUB-REGIONAL ANCHOR PARTNERS

West African Health Organization

Infectious Diseases Institute

Ifakara Health Institute

James P Grant School of Public Health, BRAC University

University of Indonesia

TECHNICAL RESOURCE PARTNERS

Implementation Assistance Providers

CARE

World Vision

Pathfinder

Americares

Project Concern International (PCI)

Global Alliance to Prevent Prematurity and Stillbirth (GAPPS)

Elizabeth Glaser Pediatric AIDS Foundation (EGPAF)

Evidence Advocates

Global Alliance for Clean Cookstoves

White Ribbon Alliance

African Academy for Public Health (AAPH)

East, Central and Southern Africa Health Community (ECSA-HC)

Partners in Population and Development (PPD)

Centre for Health Sciences Training, Research and Development (CHESTRAD)

Evaluation and Research Institutions

London School of Hygiene & Tropical Medicine

University of Bordeaux Institute for Public Health, Epidemiology, and Development (ISPED)

Barcelona Institute for Global Health (ISGlobal)

University of Oslo, Department of Informatics

Makerere University

Muhimbili University of Health and Allied Sciences (MUHAS)

Universitas Gadjah Mada

Indiana University/AMPATH

Columbia University/Averting Maternal Death and Disability (AMDD)

Population Council

Tata Institute of Social Sciences

Harvard TH Chan School of Public Health

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APPROACH

The Implementation Science Collaborative is comprised of organizations that already work to advance global health goals as implementation support organizations, regional health bodies, policy advocacy groups, civil society based evidence advocates, research organizations and academic institutions. This strategic mix of partners will help to inform which research questions are prioritized in different contexts; to generate and analyze evidence; and to better package and move evidence through channels which render it more accessible to inform policy and practice.

Emphasizing more effective stakeholder engagement and knowledge management throughout, the four main strategies of the Collaborative are: (1) partnership and agenda development; (2) research and evaluation study design and implementation; (3) data liberation and evidence strengthening; and (4) the acceleration of evidence-to-use processes.

The Collaborative will seek to:

- Effectively respond to evaluation and research-to-use global health priorities: developing the study designs and issue-specific partnerships required to navigate a complex effort along a strategic research-to-use pathway;
- Actively engage national, regional, and global-level stakeholders for the development of those priorities: engaging and supporting a growing community of interested implementers, policy makers, and investigators in shaping and promoting a more relevant research-to-use agenda and capacity; and by
- Strengthening and connecting the institutional applied research capacities required to sustain a vigorous implementation science agenda in support of global health goals, emerging threats and new opportunities.

